

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 095975

60

ORIGIN SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 DEAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01

USIA-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 TRSE-00

NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01 /068 R

DRAFTED BY S/NM:RADUGSTAD:OSG

APPROVED BY S/NM:SBVANCE

AID/SER/INC:MMCBEE (INFO)

ARA/LA:GBROWN (INFO)

ARA/MEX:JKEANE (INFO)

DEA:ISWANK (INFO)

----- 023635

R 210027Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS STATE 095975

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE OF APRIL 18, 1976

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS PREPARED APRIL 19 REPEATED FOR POST
INFORMATION:

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON IF ASKED BASIS FOR WASHINGTON
POST ARTICLE, "WAR OVER MEXICO'S BROWN GOLD," APRIL 18,
1976.

Q. CAN YOU COMMENT ON THE PERCENTAGE OF ILLEGAL HEROIN
ENTERING THE U.S. FROM MEXICO?

A. U.S. AUTHORITIES DO ESTIMATE, BASED UPON SEIZURES,
THAT 80-90 PERCENT OF THE HEROIN ILLEGALLY ENTERING THE
U.S. CURRENTLY ORIGINATES IN MEXICO.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 095975

Q. IS THE U.S. USING JOINTLY WITH MEXICO U.S. SPY SATELLITES IN THE MEXICAN OPIUM POPPY ERADICATION CAMPAIGN?

A. NO, THIS IS OBVIOUSLY AN ERROR IN THE ARTICLE. LOW LEVEL AERIAL PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE SYSTEM IS BEING USED BY THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT TO LOCATE THE POPPY FIELDS.

Q. THE ARTICLE CLAIMS THE U.S. IS SPENDING ABOUT \$40 MILLION IN THE POPPY WAR. IS THIS CORRECT?

A. U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR FISCAL YEARS 1973 THROUGH 1976 TO ASSIST THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IN ITS COMMITMENT TO ERADICATE POPPIES AMOUNTS TO \$29.4 MILLION. CONTINUING U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR THE FIFTH QUARTER AND FISCAL 1977 IS PLANNED AT THE LEVEL OF \$13.9 MILLION. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY SPENDING ABOUT \$35-\$40 MILLION PER YEAR ON THIS PROGRAM.

Q. IS THE U.S. PLANNING TO PROVIDE MEXICO WITH THE LARGE NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT QUOTED IN THE ARTICLE?

A. THE ASSESSMENT OF ASSISTANCE NEEDS FOR ONGOING POPPY CAMPAIGNS IS CURRENTLY UNDER WAY, BUT NO LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE OF THE KIND QUOTED ARE EXPECTED AT THE PRESENT TIME. THE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT QUOTED IS APPROXIMATELY THE CURRENT LEVEL OF AIRCRAFT USED BY THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IN THE CAMPAIGN, NOT A NEW PLANNING FIGURE.

Q. ARE U.S. CONTRACT PILOTS CONDUCTING THE SPRAYING OF THE OPIUM CROPS IN MEXICO?

A. THE MEXICAN ERADICATION CAMPAIGN IS SOLELY UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT AND RECEIVES ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. IN THE FORM OF EQUIPMENT AND ADVISORY SERVICES. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CURRENTLY HAS 54 MEXICAN PILOTS. THE U.S. HAS FUNDED TRAINING FOR THE USE OF SPRAY DEVICES, WITH FIVE PILOT TRAINERS NOW COMPLETING THEIR FOUR MONTHS' CONTRACT. WE ASSUME MIKE IS ONE OF THESE AND THEREFORE NOT AT ALL MYSTERIOUS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 095975

Q. ARE THERE STILL THOUSANDS OF POPPY FIELDS IN MEXICO THAT CAN ONLY BE LOCATED AND DESTROYED BY THE MEXICAN ARMY?

A. WE ARE INFORMED THAT THE MEXICAN ARMY REMAINS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE ERADICATION CAMPAIGN. HOWEVER, THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF SPRAYING THE REMOTE POPPY FIELDS FROM THE AIR HAS PROVEN EFFECTIVE AGAINST VIRTUALLY ALL

FIELDS. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT BELIEVES, AND OUR INFORMATION SUPPORTS ITS ESTIMATES, THAT ABOUT 20,000 OF THE LESS THAN 21,000 POPPY FIELDS NOW EXISTENT IN MEXICO HAVE BEEN DESTROYED IN THE LAST FIVE MONTHS. THE REMAINDER WILL BE DESTROYED SHORTLY. THE EFFORT BY THE SPRAY APPROACH AND THE MEXICAN ARMY WILL CONTINUE ON A YEAR-AROUND BASIS.

Q. WHAT CHEMICAL DEFOLIANTS ARE BEING USED BY THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT TO KILL POPPIES BY AERIAL SPRAYING?

A. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT SELECTED THE HERBICIDE FROM AMONG THOSE IN USE IN PAST YEARS BY THE MEXICAN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY AND AFTER APPROVAL BY THE MEXICAN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE HERBICIDE CURRENTLY BEING SPRAYED BY THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IS KNOWN IN THE U.S. AS "2-4-D", A WELL-KNOWN BROAD LEAF WEED KILLER WHICH IS HARMLESS TO HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT. ROBINSON

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INSTRUCTIONS, PRESS COMMENTS, DRUG TRAFFIC, HEROIN, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE095975
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RADUGSTAD:OSG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760150-0358
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760438/aaaabger.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SNM
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 AUG 2004 by schaeafaj>; APPROVED <12 JAN 2005 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE OF APRIL 18, 1976 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS PREPARED APRIL 19 REPEATED FOR POST
TAGS: SNAR, SOPN, MX, US, WASHINGTON POST
To: MEXICO
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006